

Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A drive circuit for controlling a switching device ON/OFF, comprising

a short circuit detection means that detects short circuit of the switching device,

a soft cutoff means that gradually decreases the gate terminal voltage of the switching device when short circuit is detected by the short circuit detection means,

a gate voltage detection means that detects the gate terminal voltage of the switching device, and

an ON-pulse retention means that retains the drive circuit output ON when the gate terminal voltage detected by the gate voltage detection means exceeds a specified value, and

a gate voltage clamp means that clamps the gate voltage of the switching device, wherein

the gate voltage clamp means is operated by an output signal of the ON-pulse retention means.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Original) A drive circuit for a switching device according to Claim 1, wherein

the switching device is one with voltage driven sense function, which is provided with a gate terminal, terminal No. 1, terminal No. 2, and terminal No. 3, where the main current is applied between the terminal No. 1 and terminal No. 2 and the sense current in proportion to the main current is applied between the terminal No. 1 and terminal No. 3 by applying voltage to the gate terminal, and

the ON-pulse retention means retains the drive circuit output ON when the gate terminal voltage detected by the gate voltage detection means exceeds a specified value and also the sense voltage of a sense resistor, connected in series to the terminal No. 3 of the switching device, exceeds a specified value.

4. (Original) A drive circuit for a switching device according to Claim 1, further comprising

a pulse width extension means that extends the pulse width of a pulse signal inputted to the drive circuit.